



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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CALIFORNIA'S GAME BIRDS
ENJOY WINTER IN ALASKA

A notable scarcity of such migratory wild fowl as ducks and geese occurred during the recent fall and winter flight in a number of the western States, particularly in California. Sportsmen and others interested in the conservation of our wild life have expressed alarm at this scarcity, fearing that this indicates a permanent decrease in the numbers of these birds.

The Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture recalls, however, that there was a notably large northward flight of birds in the spring of 1925, and that the situation looks far more serious than it is. The warm winter on the coast of British Columbia and southern Alaska is without parallel. No snow is reported below the 1,000-foot level in the very region of southeastern Alaska where a year ago deer were starving owing to the heavy snowfall which buried their food.

Telegraphic reports to the Biological Survey during the third week of January, 1926, showed an unprecedented number of ducks and geese remaining along the coast of southern Alaska and northern British Columbia. An abundance of ducks and geese has been noted as far north as the flats about the mouths of the Copper and Bering Rivers. From Wrangell, Alaska,

come reports of many ducks and geese on the flats near there, and the Stikine River flats in northern British Columbia, are reported to be free of snow and ice. A wireless dated January 22 from the Alaska Game Commission advised the Biological Survey that large numbers of mallards and thousands of geese were on the Stikine flats, a remarkable occurrence for this time of the year.

The scarcity of birds in various parts of the West during the fall and winter of 1925 and 1926 does not necessarily mean a corresponding actual decrease in the total number of the existing wild fowl. Mild fall and winter weather in southern Canada and along the northern border of the United States and the deficient rainfall in the West have caused erratic movements among these birds, many of their usual haunts having been passed over by them in the southward flight.

The fact that millions of birds are reported on some of the large wintering grounds in the southern parts of the country is evidence that vast numbers of them have come down from the North.

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